

**NEW PROGRAM PROPOSAL:
DOCTOR OF NURSING PRACTICE,
UNIVERSITY OF KENTUCKY**

ACTION
Agenda Item F-1-a
May 22, 2000

Recommendation:

That the Doctor of Nursing Practice degree program proposed by the University of Kentucky be approved and registered in CIP 51.1608 (Nursing Science-Post R.N.)

Rationale:

- The proposed Doctor of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.) degree would build upon baccalaureate and master's level nursing education and prepare nurses for senior clinical leadership and executive level positions in an increasingly complex clinical and organizational health services delivery environment. It is intended to give graduates the tools to balance clinical and management issues.
- The Pew Health Professions Commission, journal articles, and position announcements indicate a need for nurses whose knowledge and skills are a blend of strong clinical expertise and the ability to plan, organize, implement, and evaluate complex health delivery programs and systems. A survey of Kentucky employers conducted by the UK College of Nursing concludes that employment prospects for graduates of this program are excellent. The types of positions for which graduates are likely to be employed include faculty and upper-level administrative positions in health care facilities.
- Based on a survey of licensed Kentucky nurses, student interest in doctoral education in nursing is high. Further, the interest in the professional doctorate is much higher than interest in the research oriented Ph.D. Another indicator of demand for the professional doctorate is that the newest program of this type - at University of Tennessee-Memphis - received 100 applications for 10 positions in the program's first entering class.
- Students can choose between two tracks, Clinical Practice Leadership or Executive Management, but each is designed to integrate the strengths of both segments. After students complete their coursework they will participate in a clinical residency that is project-focused and research-based. The residency will be the culminating experience of the program.
- While there will be some full-time students, the proposed program is being designed to meet the needs of students who are employed full-time. Courses are delivered in non-traditional formats, such as one-week blocks or one weekend per month. There will be extensive use of distance learning and other electronic technologies to supplement classroom work and facilitate faculty/student/clinical mentor communication.

An executive summary submitted by the University of Kentucky is attached to this agenda item.

Staff Preparation by Larry Fowler

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of the proposal is to provide a program to develop expert nurse leaders for clinical practice and executive positions who will shape health care to improve health outcomes.

Health care delivery and the environment in which it occurs is rapidly changing resulting in increasing demands for nurses to assume major leadership roles in the clinical arena and in management of care delivery. In view of the changing expectations for nurses and the emerging opportunities in health care, the College of Nursing believes it is timely to propose the development of a professional doctoral program to provide practicing nurses with advanced leadership and clinical decision making capabilities to enable them to respond to the challenges of practice in the new millennium.

This program supports the institution's mission and its **long-range instructional plan**. In keeping with the University's mission, graduates will be prepared to continue learning throughout their lives, will enhance human and economic development through their leadership activities in the health care arena and will provide public service as they attempt to improve the health of the residents of the commonwealth.

With movement toward a higher degree of health care system integration, more managed care and increased attention to evidence-based decision-making, nurses will be needed who have advanced clinical preparation as well as advanced preparation in dealing with system issues such as developing quality clinical programs and assessing care processes and outcomes. The proposed program will be separate from but complementary to the Ph.D. in nursing program and will be comparable to other professional degree programs such as the Doctorate of Public Health, the Doctorate of Pharmacy, and the Doctorate of Psychology. Doctoral level expertise in business, psychology, education and nursing is available within the College. In addition, local individuals with experience as administrators in health care settings have expressed an interest in participating in the program.

The Doctorate of Nursing Practice (D.N.P.), a professional program, prepares nurses for senior leadership positions in health systems of today and tomorrow. Learning experiences include an innovative, evidence-based practice residency. This unique program builds on the advanced practice of nursing at the masters level and develops nursing leaders to improve health care by improving outcomes at the individual client, population, and system levels. The program will be placed within the Chandler Medical Center in the College of Nursing. As a professional program the degree would be granted by the University through the College of Nursing.

Because of the potential characteristics of the student pool for this program, professional nurses throughout the Commonwealth and the region who will pursue much of the program while employed full or part-time, it is anticipated that distance learning modalities will be necessary for the delivery of a significant proportion of the offerings. Initially enrollment for the program will be limited to ten new students each academic year.

The curriculum of the proposed professional nursing doctorate program will be composed of:

- 1) a required core in program evaluation; (2) a required core in leadership; (3) a required clinical residency that culminates in an evaluation project; (4) a series of cognates that support specialization in a domain related to the student's clinical expertise and career goals, and (5) a

choice of a track that focuses either on executive management or clinical leadership. Students who receive approval from the faculty mentor and Program Director to take cognate courses at another institution may do so. This includes up to 9 credit hours of coursework.

The program has mandatory clinical experiences. Clinical sites for the program encompass a wide variety of settings and differ according to which track the student selects. Students who select the executive management track will be placed in both health care agencies, and non-health related settings that range from local to international networks and service areas (e.g. for-profit companies with stockholders to not-for profit health delivery consortiums). Students within the clinical track will choose settings across the care continuum. These settings will vary in complexity of health services and diversity of populations being served (e.g., a network of mobile clinics providing primary care services as well as an academic medical center with a multi-purpose mission). The aim of using these sites in the program is to provide a reality-based experience for the student that exposes the student to the complex and conflicting demands placed upon nursing leaders and executives when dealing with multiple constituencies. There has been an outpouring of community support for the implementation of this program. Agencies represented by these supporters will serve as the initial clinical sites. In a survey of 392 employers, with 111 responding, 80 positions were identified for the graduate if available today.

This program does not prepare students for certification post-graduation. There are no professional nursing accrediting or certifying bodies that examine doctoral level programs in nursing. The College of Nursing is accredited by the National League for Nursing and the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. The Ph.D. program is reviewed by SACS. The Ph.D. program met SACS requirements during the University of Kentucky accreditation visit in 1992. The Ph.D. program will be reviewed again in the upcoming University accreditation process. The new proposed program will be reviewed by SACS and will be held to the SACS standards as is the Ph.D. program. This program will adhere to the published policies and admission procedures for the graduate programs in the College of Nursing.

At the completion of the program, students will be able to:

1. Integrate clinical expertise with population focused care management, research, and health care policy to provide leadership in health care.
2. Design, implement, manage, and evaluate care delivery systems to meet the needs of populations.
3. Apply clinical, political, organization, and economic theories to care delivery systems to improve health outcomes for populations.
4. Develop networks and manage constituencies in complex health systems.
5. Plan, manage, evaluate and re-direct continuous personal and professional self-development.
6. Solve problems that affect health and health care delivery through clinical leadership.
7. Create environments that foster innovation and risk taking.
8. Create practice environments in which decisions are based on critical analysis of levels of evidence.

Oversight of the program will be provided by the Program Director, by an Advisory Committee composed of experts and individuals representing potential employers, and by the Professional

Doctoral Program Coordinating Committee composed of faculty teaching or advising in the program. The Professional Doctoral Program Coordinating Committee will be responsible for summative evaluation of the program every three years. In addition, the Committee will submit an Annual Report of Activities related to the program to the Chair of the College Evaluation Effectiveness Committee that monitors the overall College evaluation plan as well as the strategic indicators of the College on a yearly basis.

The proposed Doctorate of Nursing Practice Program is unique. No comparable program exists in the state and only two programs with limited similarity exist in the southeast (University of Tennessee-Memphis and University of South Carolina-Columbia). The proposed program will admit master's graduates in nursing from the University of Kentucky and other accredited nursing programs. This program is designed to prepare students for state and regional markets and will not duplicate any existing program in the Commonwealth.

The general prospects for applicants to the proposed program are excellent. Specific prospects have been identified through a statewide market survey of potential students. A statewide survey of 10,000 of the 45,000 registered nurses in Kentucky in January, 1999 yielded a total of 1927 respondents for a response rate of 19.3%. Respondents reported a very strong interest in this program ($N=805$).

The only avenue currently available in the Commonwealth for continued study in nursing at the doctoral level is the Ph.D. level. Ph.D. programs prepare nurse scientists for the development and conduct of original research. The Ph.D. degree option does not meet the need to prepare individuals for expert advanced clinical nursing practice and executive nursing management who focus on research utilization, rather than research generation.

Initial enrollment projections are made on the assumption that no more than 10 students will be admitted each year, with 30% studying full time and 70% part time. The first graduates are projected for spring, 2003. Further, it is assumed that the full-time students will take three years to complete the program with the first graduates in the spring of 2003 and part-time students will take up to six years, with the first graduates in the spring of 2006. Within 6 years the program expects to graduate a minimum of 10 students per year.

Current facilities in the College of Nursing and Health Science Learning Center will be used on a permanent basis for the proposed program. New facilities will not be required. The holdings of the Medical Center Library and the W.T. Young Library with their continuing acquisitions are adequate to support the proposed program. The pool of faculty identified to participate in the program is considered to have adequate preparation. These faculty will be complemented by carefully selected clinical mentors who will participate with students and faculty advisors in planning the students' program of study and in clinical practice settings. There will be one clinical mentor per student at any point in time. These mentors will be chosen from arenas related to each student's career goals.